

PERSONALITY CORRELATES OF RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES: THE CASE OF CAMPUS CRUSADE AND UNIFICATION CHURCH*

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Due to socio-cultural developments in western societies, traditional instruments for religious attitude testing have become increasingly inadequate. Measurement problems can perhaps be avoided, however, by focussing on the person's individual relationship with God. The Religious Relations Questionnaire (Hutsebaut, 1976) was used to assess the relation-to-God of Unification Church ("Moonie") and Campus Crusade members. It was found that Campus Crusade members prefer a direct, vertical relationship with God, while the Unification Church members' relationship with God is more horizontal in that they value more strongly the possibility of meeting God through human relations. Campus Crusaders, more than Moonies, feel that man needs God's help (dependence), and they are more reluctant to admit human autonomy. Moonies, on the other hand, show a stronger tendency to deny feelings of guilt. MMPI scores revealed that members of both movements generally do not show a pathological personality structure, but differences between the groups (with Campus Crusaders having higher scores) were found on three MMPI scales (Psychastenia, Schizophrenia and Social Introversion). Redundancy analysis resulted in two factors to be extracted from the MMPI profiles to explain the variance of RRQ scores. Subjects inclined towards admitting feelings of guilt and rebelliousness in their relationship with God, show in their personality profile a tendency of non-defensiveness and social introversion. On the second factor, characterized by low scores on the MMPI scales Social Introversion, Hysteria, Depression, Psychastenia and Schizophrenia, the RRQ scales of autonomy, co-humanity and identification with Jesus have high positive loadings.

INTRODUCTION

An important task of contemporary empirical psychology of religion is to solve the measurement problem that is caused by recent religious and cultural changes in our western societies. The traditional instruments for the assessment of religious attitudes have become increasingly inadequate (if only for linguistic reasons), because of the pluralization process that characterizes our days. A variety of religious options has

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appeared alongside the Judeo-Christian, and privatization of religious beliefs has had as a consequence that for many persons who still adhere to the Christian gospel, many traditional Christian ideas either do no longer have a uniform meaning or have become irrelevant. These developments seriously undermine the validity of instruments for the measurement of religious attitudes.

This (content) validity problem is not identical with the inability of psychologists to find personality and behavioral correlates of (religious) attitudes (i.e., lack of predictive validity). Generally, correlations between attitude scale scores and personality measures prove to be rather low. According to Mischel (1979), the "typical personality coefficient" is .30, which means that only a minimal amount of the variance of both variables is shared variance. It has been suggested that inadequate attitude measurement might be the cause (Kreitler & Kreitler, 1976, chap. 12), while neglect of interfering variables has been another suggestion (Wicker, 1969; Alwin, 1973). The social determination of attitude scale scores might be one of these interfering variables, as is shown by the fact that, usually, control of social desirability is one of the critical topics in the process of attitude scale construction.

Both suggestions may apply to research on religious attitudes of members of youth religions and fundamentalistic sects. Even though in such research the pluralization-privatization problem is not as pregnant (because high commitment to group-norms and homogeneity of worldview characterize such groups), the high saliency of the social group-norm may be a serious problem, because one might expect traditional religious attitude scales to be insufficiently sensitive to reveal qualitative differences in religiosity among members of such groups. The primary purpose of the present study is to investigate whether intra- and intergroup differences in religious attitude can be revealed by focussing on the quality of the personal relationship which members of sectlike groups have with God. A second aim is to investigate whether personality correlates of such differences (if present) can be found. Accordingly, two general questions will be dealt with: 1. what, if any, are the differences in relation-to-God between members of Unification Church (UC) and Campus Crusade for Christ (CC); 2. can the person's type of religiosity (as expressed in relation-to-God) be related to individual personality characteristics or is it, alternatively, more determined by ideological movement characteristics.

SUBJECTS

Subjects were a. 41 Unification Church members and b. 14 adherents of Campus Crusade.

A. A list with names and addresses of the total Dutch Unification Church population ($n=93$) was obtained from the movement's national headquarters. Fifty-four Dutch Moonies were living in the Netherlands, while the remaining 39 were residing abroad. Questionnaires were mailed to each of them individually. Forty-one questionnaires were returned fully completed, six returned undelivered (non response 53%). The UC sample consists of 29 males and 12 females. Their mean age is 34 years, with five persons (12%) being over 40. On the average they had joined the movement eight years ago.

The Unification Church (founded in Korea in 1954 by Sun Myung Moon) is one of the largest, best known and most controversial "new religious movements". The movement's ideology is an eclectic mixture of Christian and oriental (Taoistic) themes. Its central thesis is that Jesus (the second Adam) has failed, because His premature death prevented Him from marrying and having children. Jesus' death on the cross must not be interpreted as the ultimate retribution, but as a failure to bring His mission to a successful end. For almost two millenia humanity has been awaiting the third Adam, whose mission will be to marry a perfect woman and start a family. Their children will be the first of a new, redeemed race. Although nowhere stated explicitly, Moon is accepted by his following as the new messiah. An evaluation of UC theology can be found in Kranenborg (1981a; 1981b) and Flasche (1981). An extensive review of the movement's organizational structure and its activities in the Netherlands can be found in Witteveen (1984, 161-188).

B. For the Campus Crusade sample, contact was made with a group of thirty members, all of them students at a Polytechnic School in The Netherlands. The local coordinator agreed to distribute the questionnaires. Only 14 fully completed questionnaires were returned, the remaining returned blank (non-response 53%). The ages of the CC sample — all males — ranged from 19 to 28 years (mean age 23 years). Data concerning their length of membership are not available.

Campus Crusade for Christ is an international evangelical movement for college and university students. Its roots are in the American Jesus People Movement. According to Bleeker et al. (1978), it is one of the most aggressive and best organized of these groups. CC-theology is purely fundamentalistic Biblical. Evangelical religiosity is furthermore characterized by a strong, personal, born-again belief in God and an emphasis on witnessing. Four beliefs are central in the movement's theology: a. God loves you and

has great intentions with your life, but; b. man cannot experience God's love nor know His intentions because of his sinfulness and separation from God; c. only through Jesus one can feel God's love and know His intentions, so; d. in order to know how to act within God's plan, one has to accept Jesus as personal Lord and Saviour. For an introduction to contemporary evangelicalism in the Netherlands, see Evangelischen in Nederland (1984).

According to Wuthnow (1976), there is an interaction between the type of group and type of potential recruit. It is unclear, however, in which way the "type of group" variable can best be operationalized. The majority of typologies of religious movements includes a Christian vs non-Christian dimension. Selection of UC and CC for our research was motivated by the fact that both movements are similar in that they require high commitment, but are different in that they represent extremely different theological options within the Christian tradition, one fundamentalistic Christian (orthodox), the other eclectic Christian-oriental (heterodox). It was expected that the first characteristic would equate the influence of the "saliency of group-norms" factor for both groups, while the second characteristic would increase the chances of finding inter-group differences in relation-to-God and in personality characteristics.

RESEARCH-INSTRUMENTS

The questionnaire included two instruments: 1. the Religious Relations Questionnaire and 2. the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory.

1. The *Religious Relations Questionnaire (RRQ)* is an instrument developed by Hutsebaut (1976) for the assessment of individual differences in relationship with God. According to Hutsebaut (1980a), the relation-to-God can be used as a psychological reference point for the assessment of individual religiousness, because it is experienced by the subject as a personal relation. The RRQ is composed of 56 items distributed into seven subscales: 1. dependency, 2. autonomy, 3. rebelliousness, 4. guilt feelings, 5. identification with Jesus, 6. common humanity (i.e., God is encountered in one's fellow-men), and 7. ethical norm (i.e., God is perceived as the absolute norm). In addition to these relation-to-God scales, the instrument includes three scales for the measurement of "acceptance of doctrine", "saliency of religion in everyday life", and "fear of uncertainty with respect to religious beliefs". Each scale contains eight five point Likert type items.

2. The *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)* was selected for the assessment of personality differences. Although the instrument was originally constructed for clinical use only, it can also be used in personality assessment of non-clinical subjects. The MMPI was selected because it has been used in the past with a wide diversity of samples, including samples of members of sectlike groups. Richardson (1985, 211) discusses "the problems associated with using instruments developed in one context (such as the individualistic, competitive American culture, as exemplified by university students) in a vastly different context (such as a communal, more collectively oriented religious group stressing basic values of love, caring, submission, etc.)." Kuner (1981 and 1984) and Ross (1983) have given evidence of the applicability of the MMPI in personality-assessment of members of several sect-like groups (including UC).

Form C of the Dutch version (Nuttin & Beuten, 1963) was used for personality assessment of UC and CC members. Its 432 items are distributed into ten clinical scales: Hs = hypochondriasis, D = depression, Hy = hysteria, Pd = psychopathic deviancy, Mf = masculinity-femininity, Pa = paranoia, Pt = psychastenia, Sc = schizophrenia, Ma = hypomania, and Si = social introversion. In addition, four control keys are provided to identify exceptional response styles: ? = evasiveness, L = social desirability, F = carelessness/misunderstanding, K = defensiveness.

RESULTS

In accordance with the research questions formulated previously, the RRQ-data will be analysed first and then related to personality characteristics as measured by the MMPI.

The Religious Relations Questionnaire

The RRQ scale characteristics that we found with our samples are different from those reported by Hutsebaut (1976, 1980a and 1980b). With our samples aggregated, mean internal consistency coefficients of the relation-to-God scales are relatively low. Hutsebaut reports a mean split-half reliability of .83, while the mean reliability of our scales is .69 only¹. With our samples, the homogeneities of the subscales "dependency" and "autonomy", especially, are unacceptably low (.48 and .54

¹ Hutsebaut (1976) used Gullikson's method for item analysis, but does not specify which formula. We computed alpha coefficients.

respectively). The five remaining scales have reliabilities between .68 and .87. Differences in reliability between our data and Hutsebaut's are also found for "acceptance of doctrine" (Hutsebaut .81; our data .63) and for "saliency" (Hutsebaut .69; our data .73). Our data confirm Hutsebaut's conclusions about the low homogeneity of the "fear of uncertainty" scale.

A possible explanation of the relatively weak quality of some subscales in our data may be the low variance of several items. Our subjects — especially the CC members — show a tendency to unanimously affirm the items of the dependency scale and reject the items of the autonomy and rebelliousness scales. However, in order to retain the possibility of comparison with other research using the RRQ, we used all the subscales in our analyses and decided not to eliminate the items with low item-to-total correlations.

In Table 1 the nature of the subjects' relation-to-God is shown, as well as T-test scores for differences of sample means.

Tab. 1 — Differences between UC (n=41) and CC (n=14) members on RRQ, tested for significance

	UC		CC		F	p	T	p	DF
	X	SD	X	SD					
Dependency	33.3	6.6	35.9	2.2	9.1	.00	-2.1	.03	53.0
Autonomy	18.5	4.7	13.3	2.4	3.7	.01	5.3	.01	44.7
Rebelliousness	10.0	3.1	11.3	2.4	1.5	.33	-1.4	.14	53.0
Guilt feelings	11.5	4.4	15.4	4.6	1.0	.80	-2.8	.01	53.0
Ident. Jesus	34.8	6.6	33.0	4.1	2.5	.07	0.9	.36	53.0
Co-humanity	32.9	6.3	20.7	6.3	1.0	1.0	6.2	.01	53.0
Ethical norm	34.6	6.3	34.4	3.4	3.3	.02	0.1	.86	42.0
Accept. Doctrine	32.2	7.8	34.1	3.1	6.0	.00	-1.2	.21	51.2
Saliency	35.4	1.9	34.6	2.6	1.8	.15	1.2	.23	51.0
Fear Uncertainty	15.9	6.2	19.4	4.4	1.9	.19	-1.9	.06	53.0

The general resemblance in score-patterns of both samples is striking, even though differences can be observed. Both samples have high saliency scores, which means that they experience their relation-to-God as having a prominent place in their daily life. On "acceptance of doctrine" both groups score high, but the UC sample shows a statistically significant ($p < .01$) greater variance. The difference between the sample means for "fear of uncertainty" almost reaches statistical significance ($p = .06$).

On several relation-to-God scales statistically significant differences between the sample means and standard deviations are found. On five of

seven scales the UC sample shows greater variance, although the difference reaches statistical significance on only three scales (dependency, autonomy, and ethical norm). A comparison of the sample means shows that the UC sample scores higher on the autonomy and co-humanity scales ($p < .01$), while the reverse is true for the dependency ($p < .05$) and guilt scales ($p < .01$)².

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory

Inspection of the MMPI scores, in order to see whether UC and CC members generally differ in personality characteristics, reveals that we do not find any confirmation of the stereotypical belief that sectlike religious movements mainly attract weak personalities. Almost all MMPI-profiles remain within the normal range (scores between 30th and 70th centile). In only six cases (3 UC and 3 CC) one or more subscales have a score outside this range. Obviously, this can hardly justify any diagnosis of general psychopathology of sectmembers.

In both samples a relatively high portion of profiles shows elevated scores on the L and K scales (social desirability and defensiveness). These scores are congruent with those found by Kuner (1981 and 1984) among a sample of German UC members. His explanation for this finding is that these elevated scores should be seen in the light of the negative image of UC in the mass media. According to Kuner (1981),

² Data for comparison with members of other new religious movements are as yet not available. Hutsebaut (1976, Pp. 165 and 174), however, presents data of a sample of Roman Catholic priests and nuns ($n=134$) and laity ($n=313$). The following table includes the scale means and standard deviations of the priests/nuns sample and of two laity age cohorts (20-30 years, $n=50$; 31-35 years, $n=51$)

	priests/nuns		laity (20-30)		laity (31-35)	
	X	sd	X	sd	X	sd
dependency	33.6	5.2	29.4	6.7	29.8	5.4
autonomy	20.5	4.8	23.5	5.7	22.5	5.1
rebelliousness	11.3	3.6	18.3	6.9	15.4	5.0
guilt feelings	12.3	4.4	16.0	6.4	15.6	6.1
identif. with Jesus	36.3	3.6	32.0	4.9	33.0	4.4
co-humanity	34.9	4.2	31.2	5.7	31.8	5.7
ethical norm	32.2	6.1	27.8	6.4	30.2	5.7
accept. of doctrine	35.0	5.0	30.2	6.3	29.6	5.6
saliency	36.0	3.1	32.2	5.5	33.0	4.0
fear of uncertainty	20.9	4.9	22.7	5.6	23.9	5.5

Comparison with Table 1 shows that, generally, the CC sample scores are the most deviant. Differences between the two laity samples are minimal, as are differences between the UC and priests/nuns samples. The differences between the CC sample and the other samples are most extreme for the dependency, autonomy and co-humanity scales.

the high L and K scores must not be interpreted as indicating neurotic defensiveness, but as a reaction to societal opposition. This suggestion, however, is not born out by our data, because our CC sample also scores high on these two scales, while CC hardly meets any negative public reactions. The most plausible interpretation — also referred to by Kuner — seems to be the one suggested in the MMPI manual (Dahlstrom et al., 1972), that “an elevated L-score may be expected in test subjects who are highly religious and moralistic individuals. They rigidly control any overt expression of anti-social or unethical impulses”. As an example, the manual refers to ministers, reformers and evangelical missionaries. Members of new religious movements may be regarded as belonging to the same category.

Although the average score pattern of both samples remains within the normal range, differences between the samples are found on several sub-scales (Table 2)³.

Tab. 2 — MMPI-scale (centile) scores for male UC (n=29) and CC (n=14) members, tested for significance

	UC		CC		F	p	T	p	DF
	X	SD	X	SD					
?	1.9	2.3	2.6	5.5	5.6	.01	-0.4	.66	15.2
L	57.0	9.5	56.1	8.3	1.3	.62	0.3	.77	41.0
F	46.6	6.9	46.7	5.8	1.5	.49	-0.1	.95	41.0
K	57.0	10.9	60.1	8.6	1.6	.35	-1.1	.29	41.0
Hs	48.3	9.1	52.0	8.6	1.1	.83	-1.2	.22	41.0
D	45.3	8.8	50.2	7.7	1.3	.63	-1.8	.08	41.0
Hy	53.7	9.8	59.0	10.4	1.1	.75	-1.6	.12	41.0
Pd	54.8	10.4	51.1	10.5	1.0	.90	0.6	.58	41.0
Mf	54.7	7.8	52.2	9.2	1.4	.45	0.9	.37	41.0
Pa	51.5	7.1	51.5	10.1	2.0	.11	0.0	.99	41.0
Pt	45.9	6.7	53.7	7.8	1.3	.49	-3.4	.01	41.0
Sc	46.5	8.1	56.6	6.6	1.5	.46	-3.7	.01	41.0
Ma	49.3	9.4	43.9	9.7	1.1	.85	1.7	.08	41.0
Si	45.3	7.1	52.1	8.3	1.4	.46	-2.8	.01	41.0

The mean score of the CC sample is higher on the so-called neuroticism scales (Hysteria, Depression, Hypochondriasis, Psychastenia) and on the Schizophrenia and Social Introversion scales, but reaches statistical significance ($p < .01$) only for Psychastenia, Schizophrenia and

³ MMPI data must be analysed for males and females separately. As the CC sample consists of males only, the UC females were not included in the analyses involving MMPI data.

Social Introversion. The elevated Schizophrenia and Social Introversion scores suggest that CC members, more than UC members, are inclined to avoid close relationships and are less able to express hostility and aggressive feelings directly. The UC sample has a (nonsignificant) higher score on the Hypomania scale.

Confronted with these differences between the samples on both the RRQ and the MMPI, the question seems pertinent whether the differences on the RRQ must be interpreted as indicating differences in group-ideologically based religious attitudes or differences in personality characteristics.

As indicated previously, four relation-to-God scales (dependency, guilt, autonomy, and co-humanity) and three MMPI scales (Psychastenia, Schizophrenia, and Social Introversion) differentiate between the two religious groups. For our samples aggregated, these MMPI scales correlate (at the $p \leq .05$ level) with three of the relation-to-God scales: -.27 between autonomy and Psychastenia, +.34 between guilt and Social Introversion, -.32, -.33 and -.34 between co-humanity and Psychastenia, Schizophrenia and Social Introversion respectively. Partial correlation analysis (Table 3) shows, however, that the differences between the UC and CC samples on the four RRQ scales cannot be explained by differences in personality characteristics.

Tab. 3 — Partial correlation analysis; "groups"-variable (UC: $n = 29$; CC: $n = 14$) with four RRQ-scales, controlling for three MMPI-scales

Zero-order correlations				
group	Dependency	Autonomy	Guilt	Co-humanity
	.25 ($p < .05$)	-.47 ($p < .01$)	.36 ($p < .01$)	-.62 ($p < .01$)
Third-order partials (controlling for Pt. Sc and Si)				
group	Dependency	Autonomy	Guilt	Co-humanity
	.39 ($p < .05$)	-.41 ($p < .01$)	.26 ($p = .05$)	-.52 ($p < .01$)

Controlling for the three MMPI scales hardly has any influence on the correlations between the "groups"-variable and the RRQ scales. In both samples religious attitudes seem to be more dependent upon ideological movement characteristics than upon personality differences.

A multivariate analysis of the RRQ and MMPI scales

Analysis of the covariation of RRQ and MMPI may contribute to the further validation of the Religious Relations Questionnaire. As yet, the instrument's concurrent validity has only been investigated by correlation with a semantic differential measuring the attribution of paternal

and maternal characteristics to God (Hutsebaut, 1976), and with a questionnaire of interpersonal relations (Hutsebaut, 1980a). In the latter study it was demonstrated that the way in which people experience their relationship with God is quite similar to the way they structure their interpersonal relations.

Redundancy analysis (Thissen & van den Wollenberg, 1975) is a statistical technique to analyse the communality of two variable sets. In many respects the technique is identical to canonical correlation analysis, but it avoids a serious disadvantage of the latter. "Where a high canonical correlation does not imply that the variates involved are important ones in the sense of explained variance, the objective of redundancy analysis is to construct variates that explain a maximum of variance of the variables of the other set" (Thissen & van den Wollenberg, 1975).

The analysis shows that only a small amount (a maximum of 29%) of the variance in the Relation-to-God scales can possibly be explained by personality characteristics as measured by the MMPI. When the MMPI subscale scores are treated as predictor variables of the RRQ-profiles, a two factor solution covers 73% of the total communality between the two sets of variables.

Tab. 4 — Redundancy Analysis; male samples aggregated, $n=43$,
MMPI-predictor factors with loadings of RRQ-scales

	Factor 1	Factor 2
L	-.65	.21
F	.29	-.12
K	-.64	-.04
Hs	-.21	-.36
D	.09	-.48
Hy	-.35	-.60
Pd	-.18	-.00
Mf	-.12	-.16
Pa	.04	.01
Pt	.09	-.48
Sc	.29	-.48
Ma	.20	.44
Si	.45	-.56
Dependency	.26	-.01
Autonomy	.12	.51
Rebelliousness	.44	-.22
Guilt feelings	.56	-.10
Identification with Jesus	-.00	.46
Co-humanity	-.09	.50
Ethical norm	.09	.21
% explained RRQ variance	9%	12%

Table 4 shows the loadings of the MMPI and RRQ scales on the rotated MMPI predictor factors. Factor 1 indicates that an RRQ profile dominated by high scores on "guilt" and "rebelliousness" is related to a personality profile with low scores on both the L scale (social desirability) and K scale (defensiveness), and with a high score on the Social Introversion scale. Looking at the second MMPI factor and its RRQ loadings, we find negative loadings of Hypochondriasis, Depression, Psychastenia, Schizophrenia and Social Introversion, and a positive loading of Hypomania. This personality profile is related to a strong identification with Jesus Christ, a tendency to affirm human responsibility (autonomy), and a tendency to meet God not directly but through one's interpersonal relations (co-humanity).

DISCUSSION

As to the first research question formulated in the introduction, we may conclude from the RRQ-score patterns that the members of both UC and CC show a strong tendency to identify with Jesus, to perceive God as the absolute ethical norm, to see themselves as being in need of God's help, to deny guilt feelings, feelings of human autonomy, and feelings of rebelliousness towards God. But there are also differences between both groups. The CC sample, as opposed to the UC sample, gives less value to human relations as a way of meeting God, and they more radically reject human responsibility as an alternative to feeling themselves totally dependent upon God. Moreover, they are less inclined to deny themselves feeling judged by God. In terms of Davidson's (1971) typology of religious beliefs, this difference between our two samples can be interpreted as indicating the prominence of a "vertical" religious attitude among CC members, and "horizontal" religious attitude among UC members. The conclusion seems justified that Hutsebaut's assumption regarding the usefulness of relation-to-God as a psychological reference point in research of religious attitudes is correct, at least for analyses at the inter-group level. A more negative conclusion must be, however, that there still remains a need for scales with higher reliability.

As to the second question, we find that the CC sample has higher scores on the MMPI scale Si = Social Introversion and lower scores on Sc = Schizophrenia (ability to adequately express hostile and aggressive feelings) and Psychasternia (self confidence). Both samples show relatively high scores on the L and K scales, indicating a defensive attitude. Although we find a statistically significant correlation between three

MMPI scales and four RRQ scales, group differences in response to these relation-to-God scales cannot be explained by the observed differences in personality characteristics. Controlling for MMPI scores does not change the correlations between the "groups"-variable and the RRQ scores. Our conclusion is that the subjects' religious attitudes, as measured by the RRQ, are more strongly influenced by ideological movement-characteristics than by individual personality characteristics.

Analysis of the common variance of the two variable sets by means of redundancy analysis, shows that only 29% of the RRQ variance is shared variance with the MMPI. However, two factors can be extracted from the MMPI profiles to explain almost threequarters of this common variance (21 % RRQ variance). Subjects inclined towards denying feelings of guilt and of rebelliousness in their relationship with God show, in their personality profile, a tendency of defensiveness and social extraversion. The second factor can, by virtue of its MMPI loadings, be interpreted as indicating mental health. The RRQ scales with high loadings on this factor are co-humanity, identification with Jesus, and autonomy. Although in this research conclusions concerning personality correlates of religious attitudes are highly restricted by the fact that only 29% RRQ variance is shared variance with the MMPI scale scores, it appears to us that further improvement of the RRQ in terms of reliability would be worthwhile, because of the instrument's potentials for discriminating individual religious attitudes of members of highly committed religious groups.

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